A SPLENDID THOMAS BALLOON...

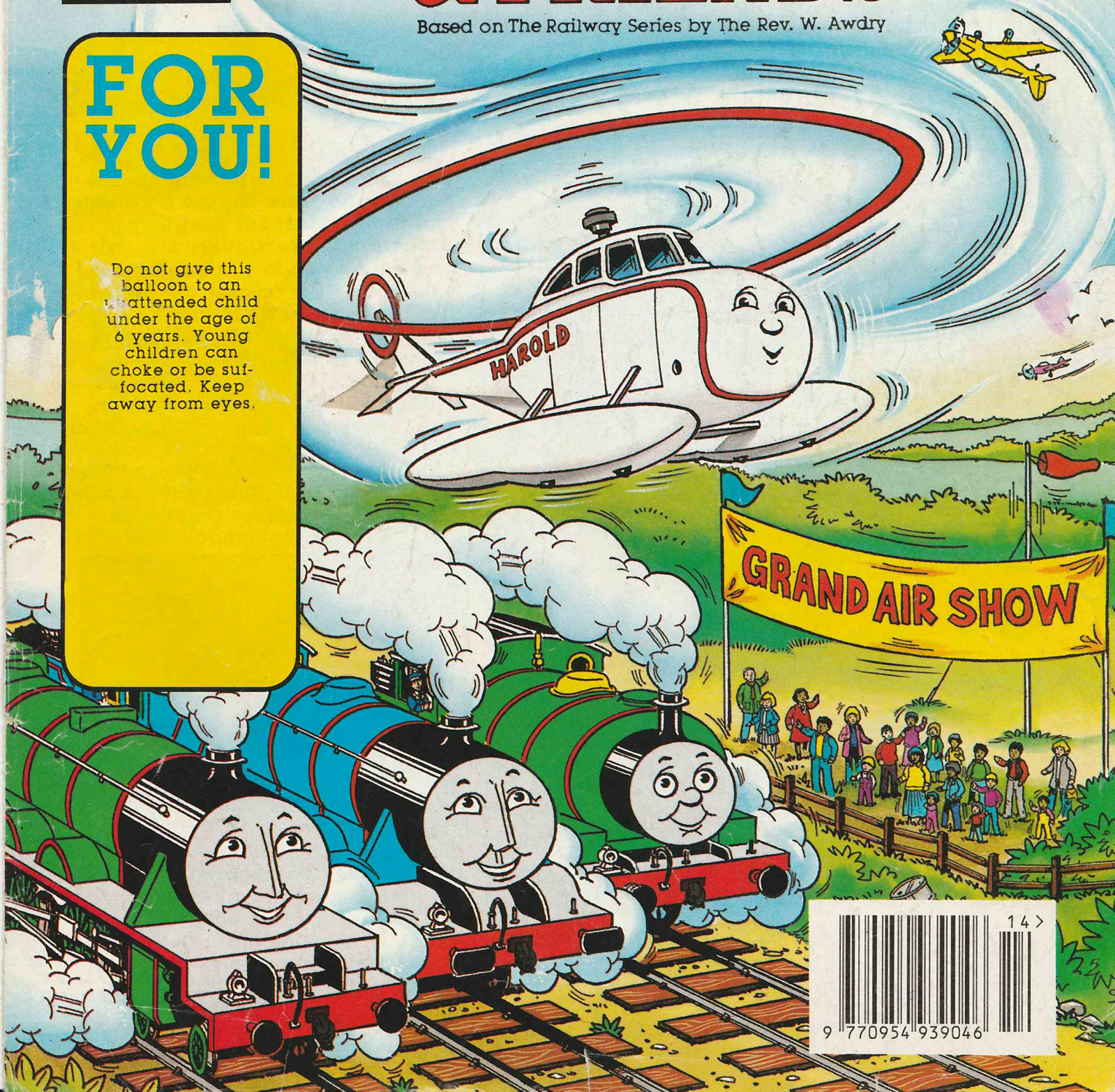
MARVEL®
10th April '93
№ 143 60p

THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS

Based on The Railway Series by The Rev. W. Awdry

FOR YOU!

Do not give this balloon to an unattended child under the age of 6 years. Young children can choke or be suffocated. Keep away from eyes.



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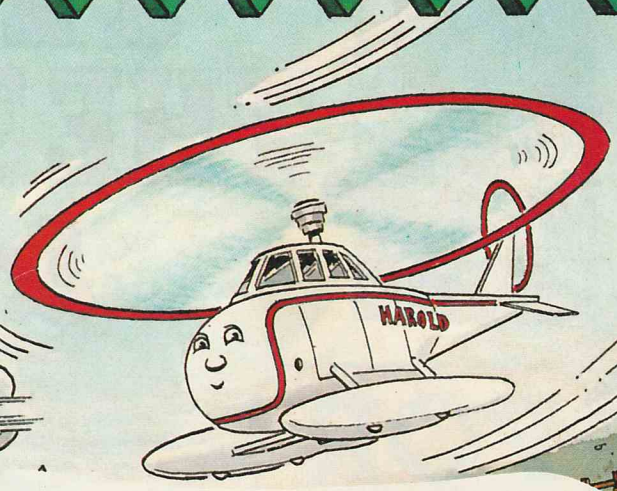
NOTICEBOARD

Peep! Peep! Percy is the Saddletank Engine who has many exciting adventures on the Island of Sodor. In the story that begins on page 3, Percy has seen a very unusual sight indeed. Will his friends believe his story? Don't miss our second story either when Percy meets the brave cyclist! Peep! Peep!



EASTER OFFER!

You can be the lucky winner of a **Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends Junior Breakfast Set**, courtesy of ***Kinnerton Confectionery Ltd***. All you have to do to win one of these splendid sets is answer the following question: **1. What are the numbers of Donald and Douglas, the twin Scottish engines?**

The senders of the first 6 correct entries will win a breakfast set. Each set retails at £3.45 and is also available from supermarkets and high street stores. Send your entries on a postcard to: ***Thomas Easter Set Competition, Marvel Comics Ltd, 13-15 Arundel St, London WC2 3DX.***

NEXT ISSUE'S COMPETITION!

Don't miss our next issue (144) of **Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends** for your chance to win a selection of ERTL (UK) Ltd's complete **Diecast** range of toys, including **Thomas, Annie and Clarabel.**

HOW TO OBTAIN YOUR FAT CONTROLLER'S CARD!

If you would like to receive your very own, splendid **Fat Controller's Card**, just send one **red Yellow** and **blue** token together with your details listed below (details need only be listed on any one of the 3 coloured tokens when applying for this offer) plus a stamped addressed envelope to: The Fat Controller's Card Offer, Marvel Comics Ltd., 13-15 Arundel Street, London WC2.

Name .....

Address .....

.....

Postcode ..... **Age** ...

THOMAS TOKEN

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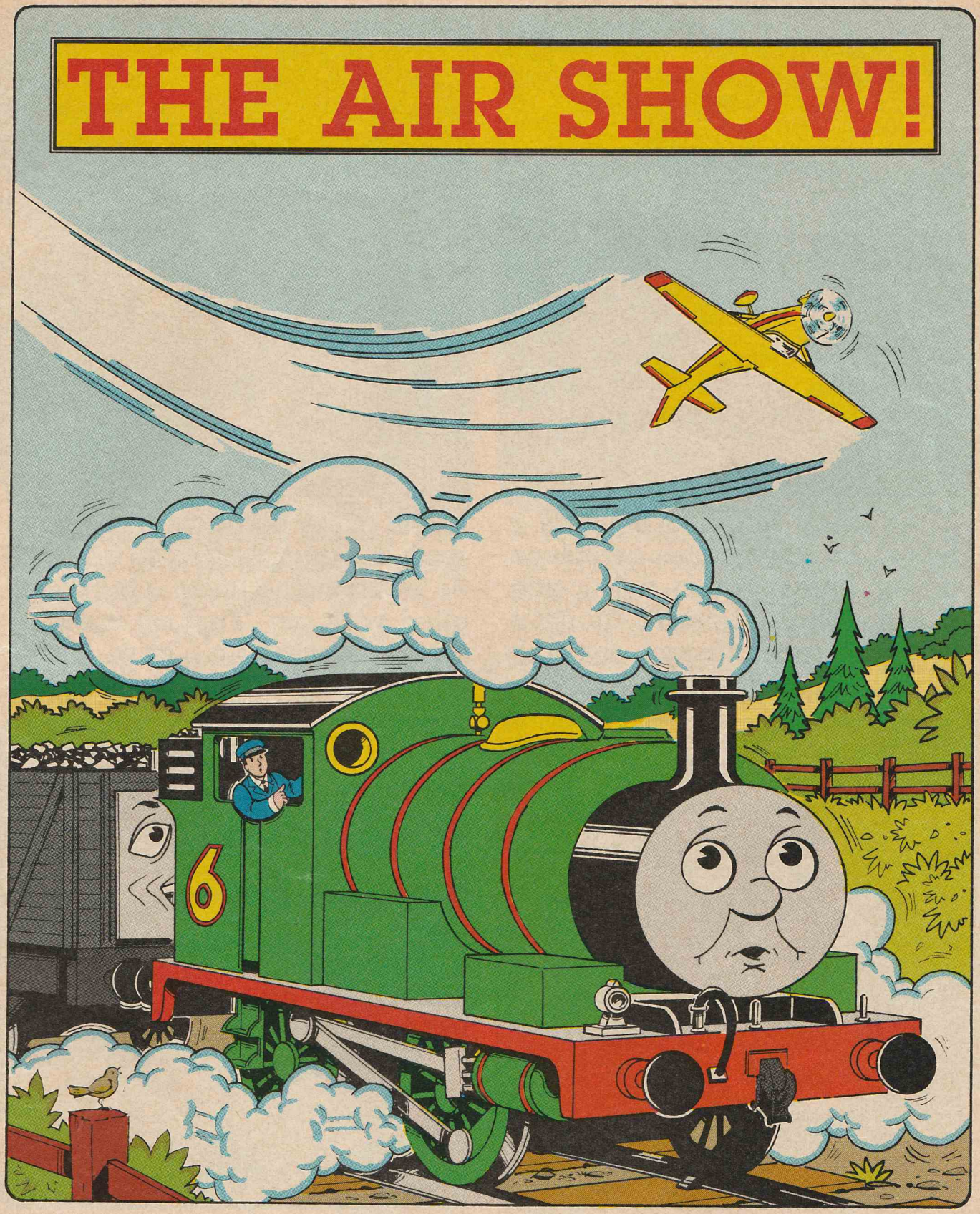
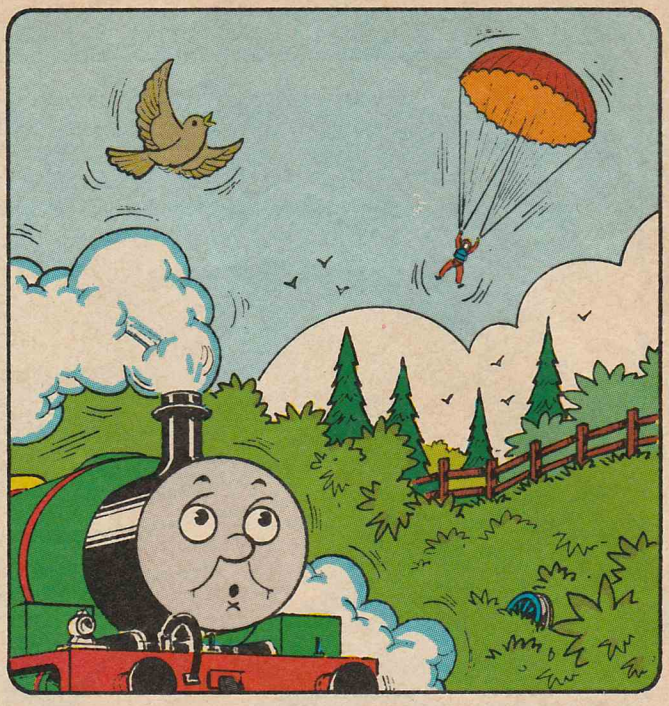
THE AIR SHOW!



1. Percy was helping to deliver supplies to the hill farms on Thomas's branch line. As he passed the airfield, he heard a noise above him. He looked up and saw an aeroplane fly past.

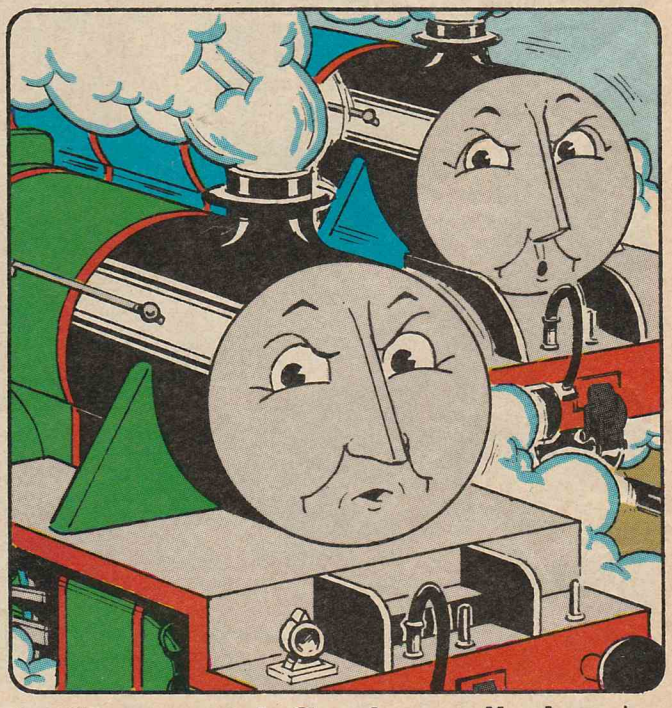
2. Percy gasped in amazement. The aeroplane was flying upside down. "Puff my pistons!" cried Percy. Next moment, the aircraft turned the right way up and landed safely at the airfield.

3. As Percy steamed towards a tunnel, he saw another aeroplane go by. This one was not upside down. "That's better!" thought Percy. He raced through the dark tunnel and out the other side.

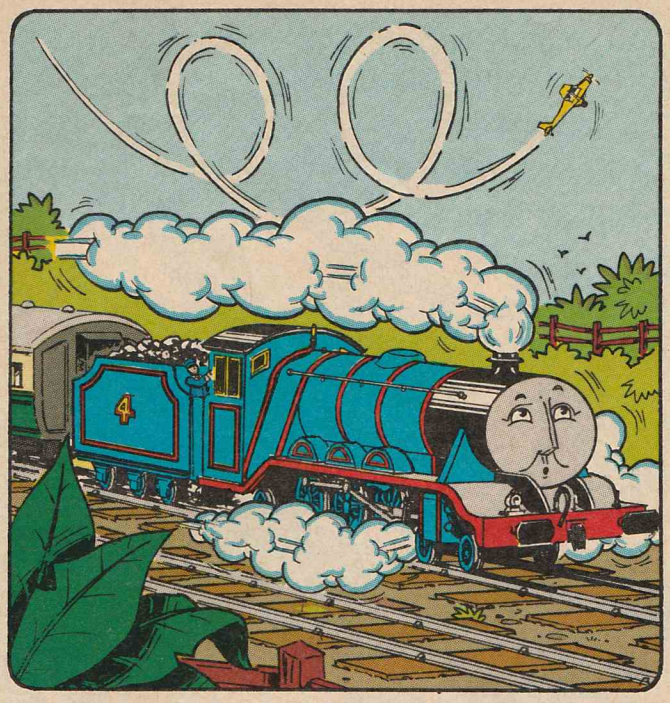


4. The plane had gone but Percy spotted a man floating in the sky. He was hanging under a big sheet filled with air. "First an upside-down aeroplane, now this!" gasped Percy. He was puzzled.

5. Back at the yard, Percy met Henry and Gordon. "Amazing, that's what it is!" said Percy. "What is?" sniffed Gordon. Percy explained what he had seen. "Ridiculous!" snorted Gordon.



6. Henry and Gordon rolled out of the yard with their coaches, to collect passengers. "Sensible tender engines, like us, don't tease about upside-down aeroplanes and floating men!" huffed Henry.



7. As Gordon pulled the Express, he saw the upside-down aeroplane too. It looped-the-loop, high in the sky, before it flew off the right way up. "That's stunt flying!" said Gordon's driver.

8. Meanwhile, Henry steamed to the Big Harbour to meet the passenger ferry. Another aeroplane flew into thick cloud above Henry. Then a man fell through the cloud straight towards him.

9. "Peep! Look out!" warned Henry. Suddenly, a huge sheet opened above the man to stop him dropping so quickly. He floated down gently and landed on the roof of one of Henry's coaches.

10. The man held on tightly as the driver applied the brake and Henry pulled up. Then the man unclipped himself from the big sheet. He climbed on to the track and rolled up the sheet.

11. "Sorry!" he said. "The wind blew my parachute off course! I was practising a parachute-jump from the aeroplane!" Henry took the man to a station so he could catch another train to the airfield. Later, Gordon and Henry told Percy they were sorry they had not believed him. Next morning, the Fat Controller asked all three engines to carry visitors to a grand air show.

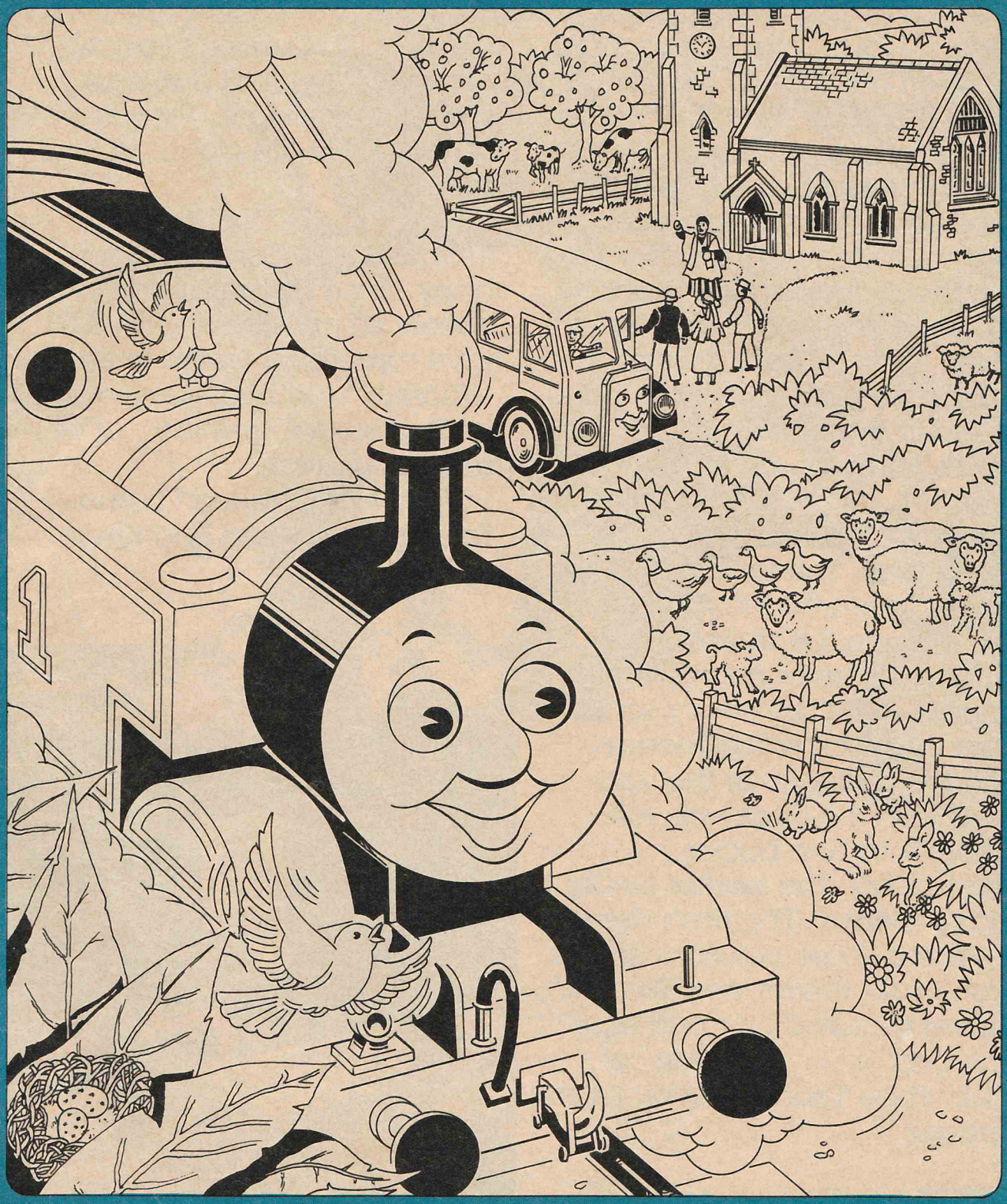
12. The engines set off eagerly. Their carriages were full of passengers going to the airfield. Everyone cheered as Harold the Helicopter hovered in the sky to open the air show. The upside-down aeroplane performed stunts and there were more parachute-jumps. The engines enjoyed the show too. "It's a splendid show," said Percy, "but I'm glad engines keep their wheels on the rails!"

THE END!

In our next issue: The flower festival!

COLOUR AND COUNT WITH THOMAS!

It's Eastertide on the Island of Sodor and the vicar is welcoming Thomas as he puffs through the countryside. You can colour in this springtime scene then complete our counting game below!



Rabbits ☐	Sheep ☐	Egg nests ☐
Birds ☐	Geese ☐	Cows ☐

4 Geese, 6 Sheep, 3 Cows, 4 Rabbits, 2 Birds, 1 Egg nest.

KEEPING WARM!

It was a cold, wet morning on the Island of Sodor. In the engine shed, Thomas woke up and shivered. The fireman arrived to light his boiler, and soon Thomas felt much warmer. He rolled into the yard and was coupled to a truck. Thomas had to collect freshly-dug potatoes from a farm along his branch line and take them to the market at Wellsworth.

Soon he steamed on his way. The farmer had driven his lorry full of potatoes to the station. Thomas's driver helped the farmer to lift the heavy sacks into the truck while Thomas waited patiently in the rain.

At last, the truck was full. There was one bag of potatoes left to load. The farmer kindly gave them to Thomas's driver.

"These spare potatoes are for you," said the farmer. Thomas's driver thanked him and lifted the bag of potatoes into his cab. Then Thomas set off for the market.

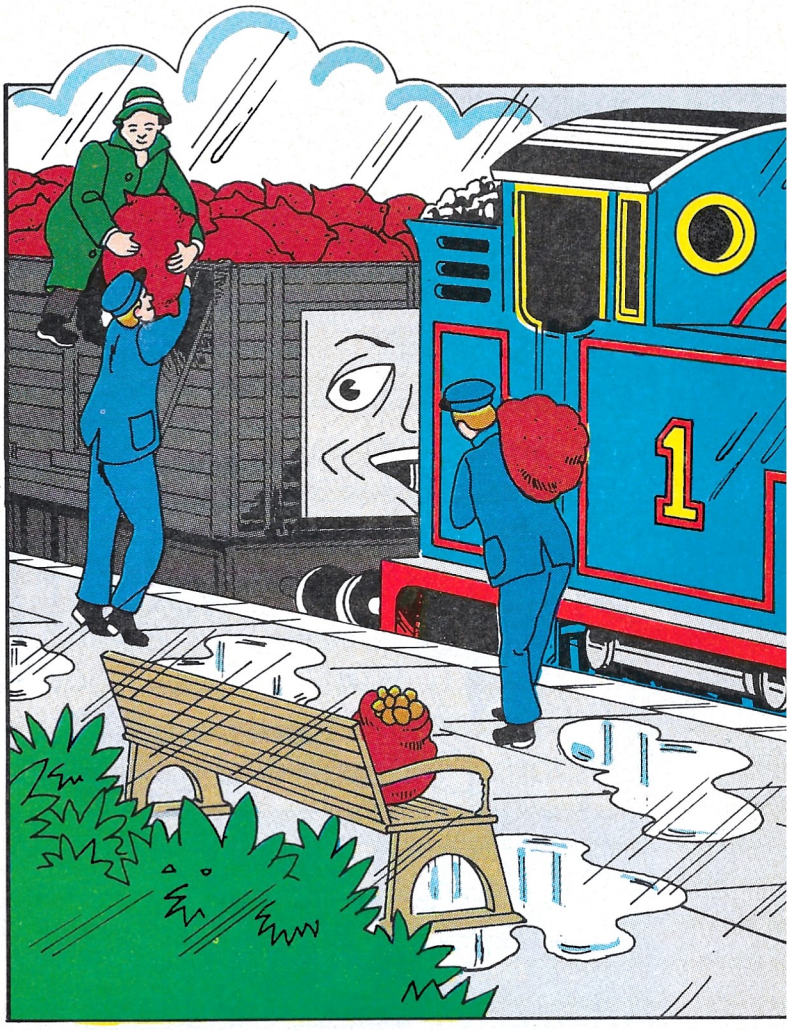
When he had delivered the potatoes, Thomas returned to the Main Station yard. Gordon was waiting to pull the Express. Duck arrived with Gordon's coaches.

Thomas saw that one coach had tables inside it. They were smartly laid with cloths, knives and forks.

"That's my buffet coach, Thomas," said Gordon importantly. "It's a restaurant on wheels, so my passengers can have something warm to eat!"

Thomas watched Gordon and the Express roll grandly out of the Main Station.

"It's not fair!" huffed Thomas. "I'm sure I'm strong enough to

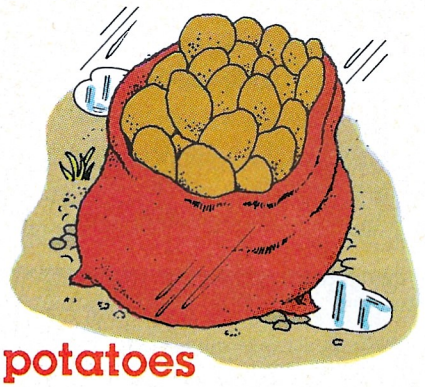


pull a buffet coach!" Then the Fat Controller came to see Thomas.

"Some engineers are repairing a section of track on the loop-line," he said. "I want you to deliver supplies to them."

"Of course, sir!" replied Thomas. The materials were loaded on to Thomas's trucks. There were sections of rail, new sleepers to go under them and special stones to be laid on the track.

Soon he raced busily along the line. The wind and rain lashed against Thomas's face but he sped on bravely. The engineers were pleased to see Thomas with the supplies. They stopped work on the track and unloaded Thomas's trucks. The men looked wet and cold.



potatoes

"It's a shame I don't have a buffet coach," sighed Thomas. "Then the engineers could have some hot food to warm them up!"

Thomas's driver had an idea and spoke to the fireman. Then the driver opened the sack of potatoes in his cab. He took some out and the fireman put them on his shovel. The fireman opened Thomas's firebox and pushed the end of the shovel inside among the hot ashes to cook the potatoes.

When they were ready, the driver called the engineers.

"Fresh-baked potatoes!" he cried. "Come and get them!" The engineers were surprised. They ate hungrily and thought the potatoes tasted delicious.

"We're much warmer now!" they said.

"It was lucky the farmer gave me those potatoes, Thomas!" grinned his driver. Thomas agreed.

"I may not pull a buffet coach but I can provide hot food, just like Gordon!" he chuckled.

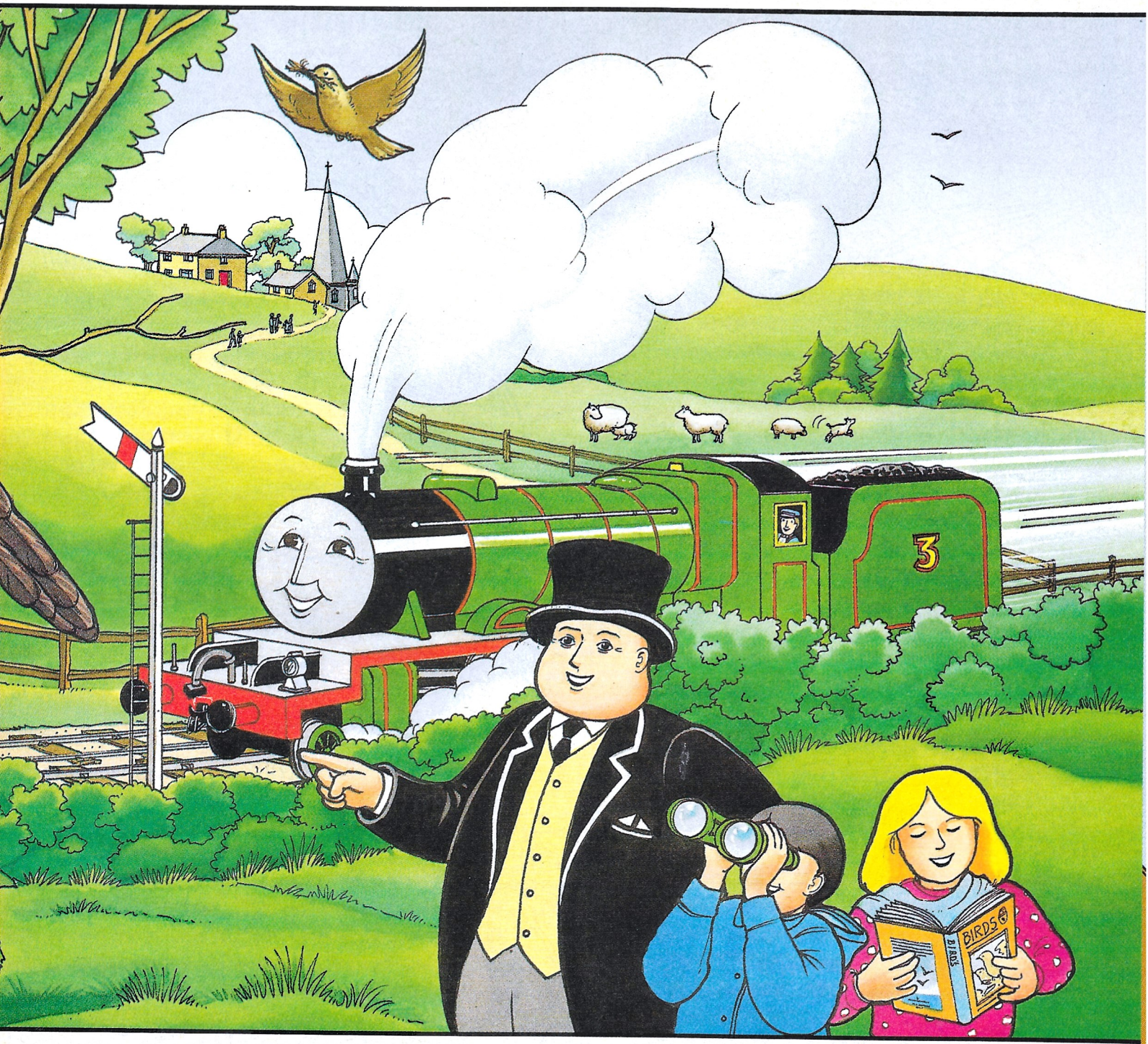
THE END!

Past the b

Which engine can you see?
What colour is he?
Point to the bird's nest!
How many magpie birds can you see?

Point to the
Who is he s
Point to the
What time

ird's nest!



at Controller!
nding beside?
nurch!
year do you think it is?

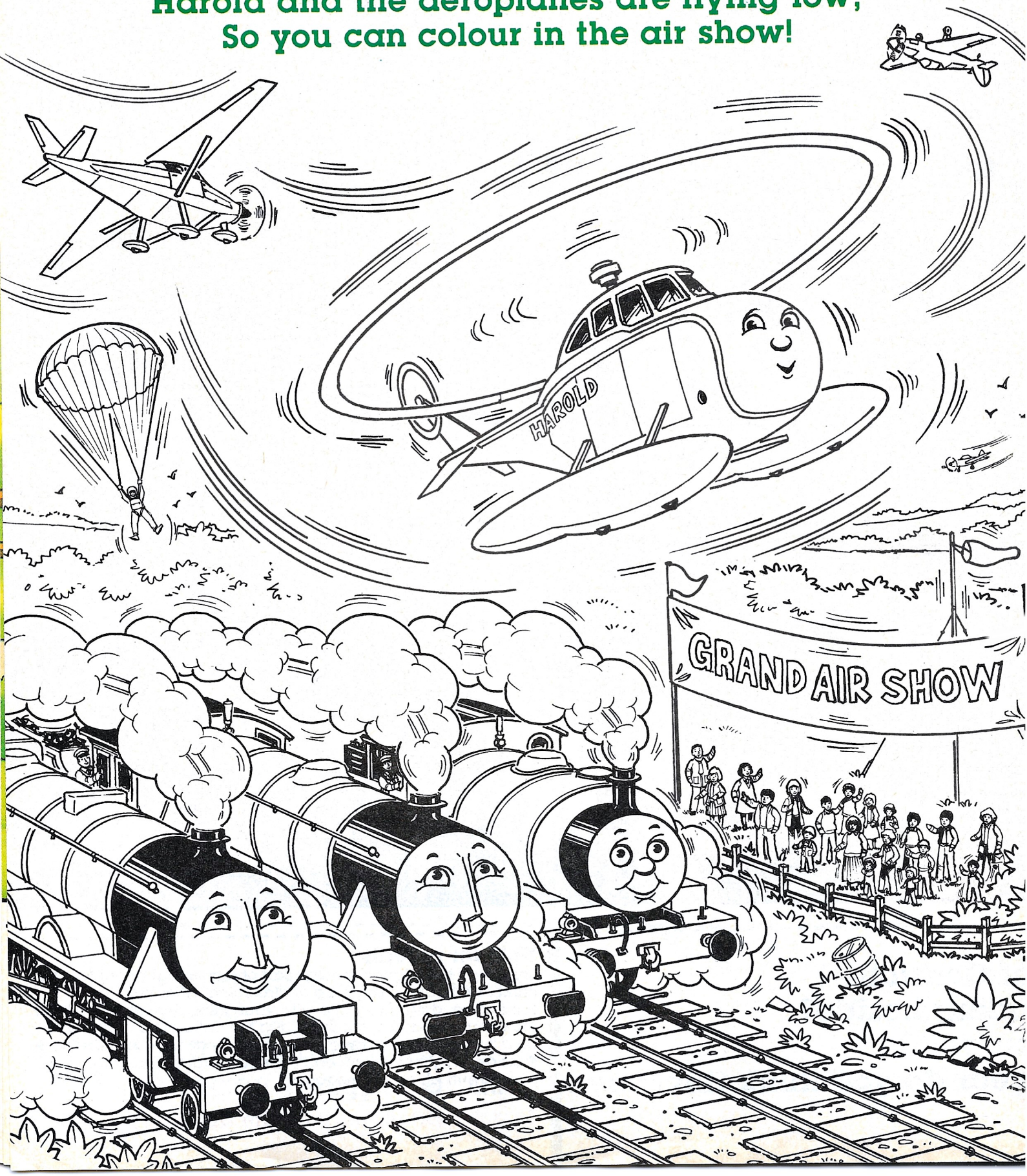
Note for parents

This page is designed to form part of a colourful mural for your child's bedroom, playgroup or classroom. After you have finished reading the comic with your child, remove this part of the centrespread by cutting along the dotted line. There will be a **'mural page'** in every issue of **Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends**. Why not collect each one and watch Thomas and his friends puff all round the room!

In our next issue: Past the air show!

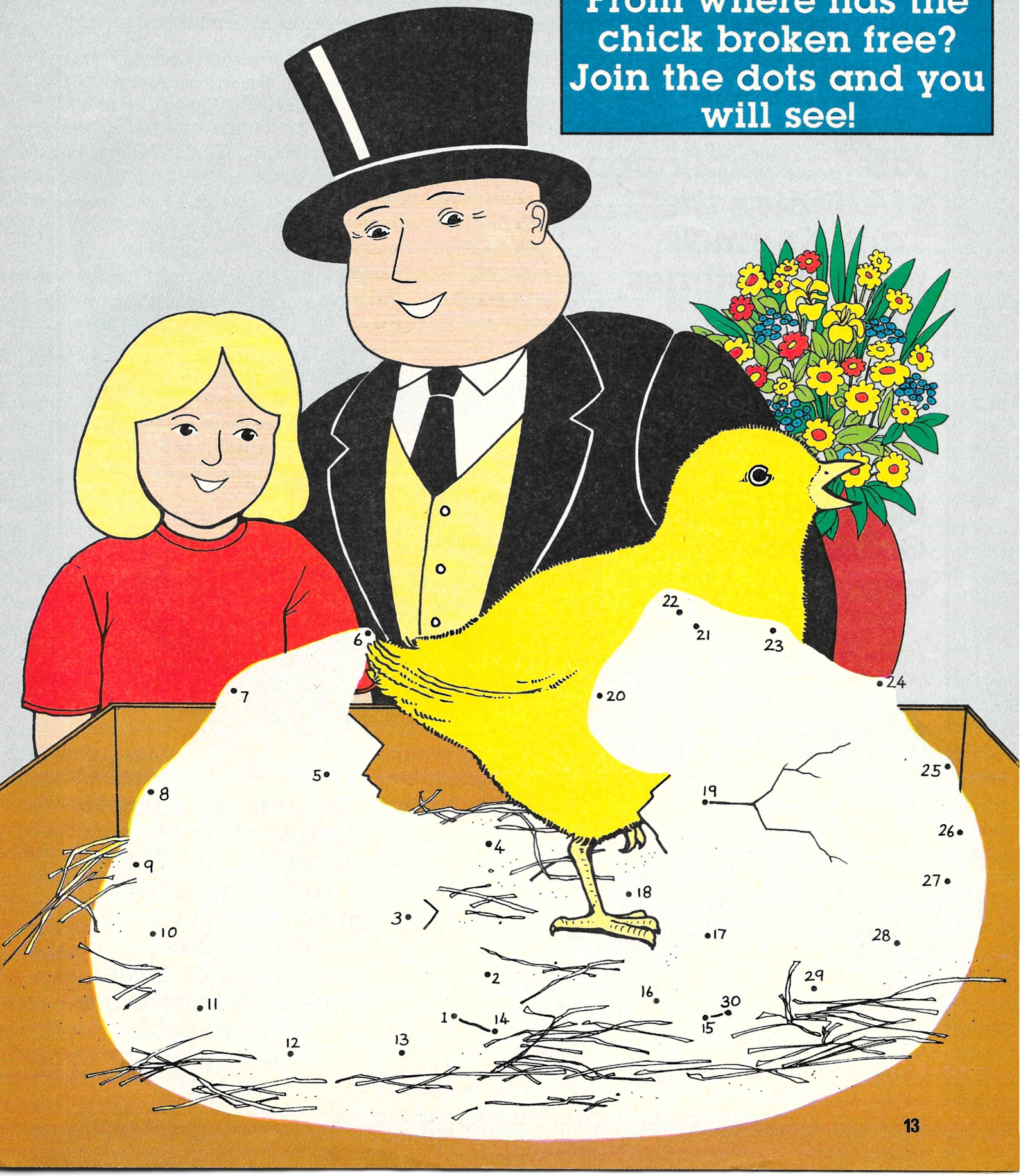
COLOURING TIME!

Harold and the aeroplanes are flying low,
So you can colour in the air show!



JOIN THE DOTS!

From where has the chick broken free? Join the dots and you will see!



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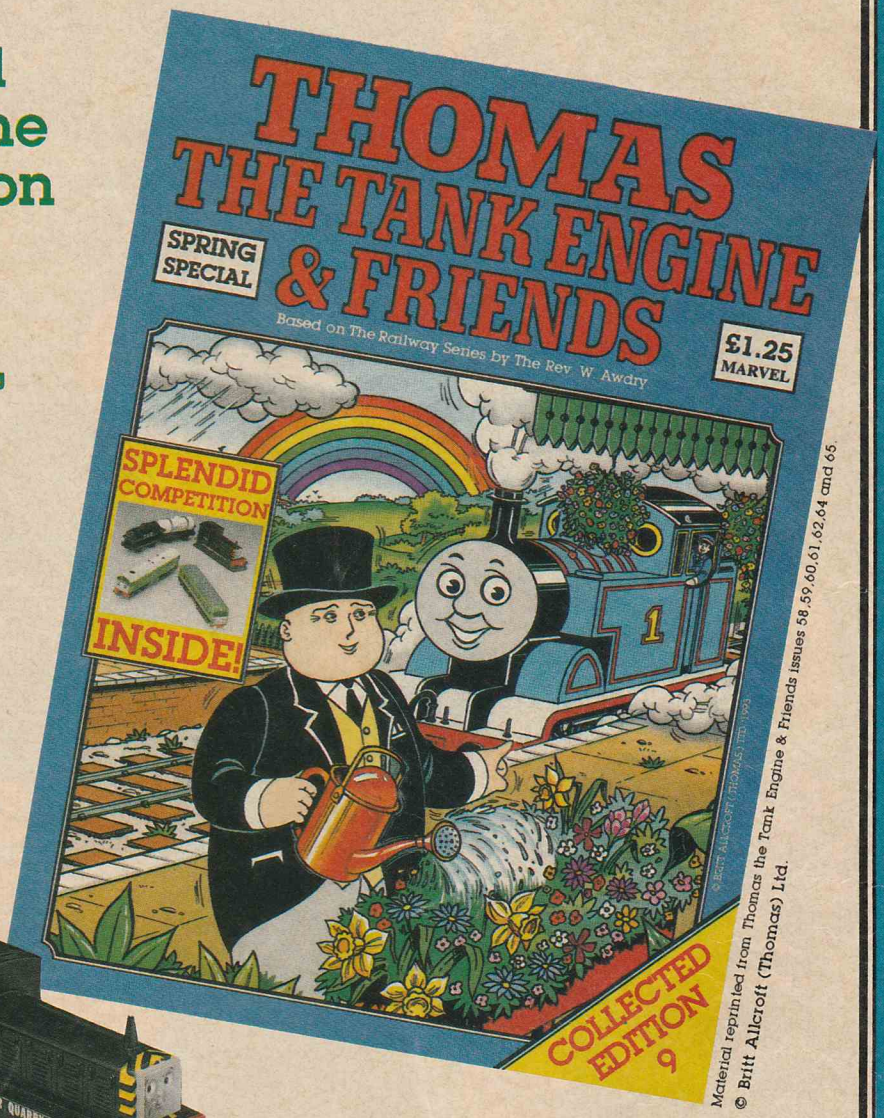
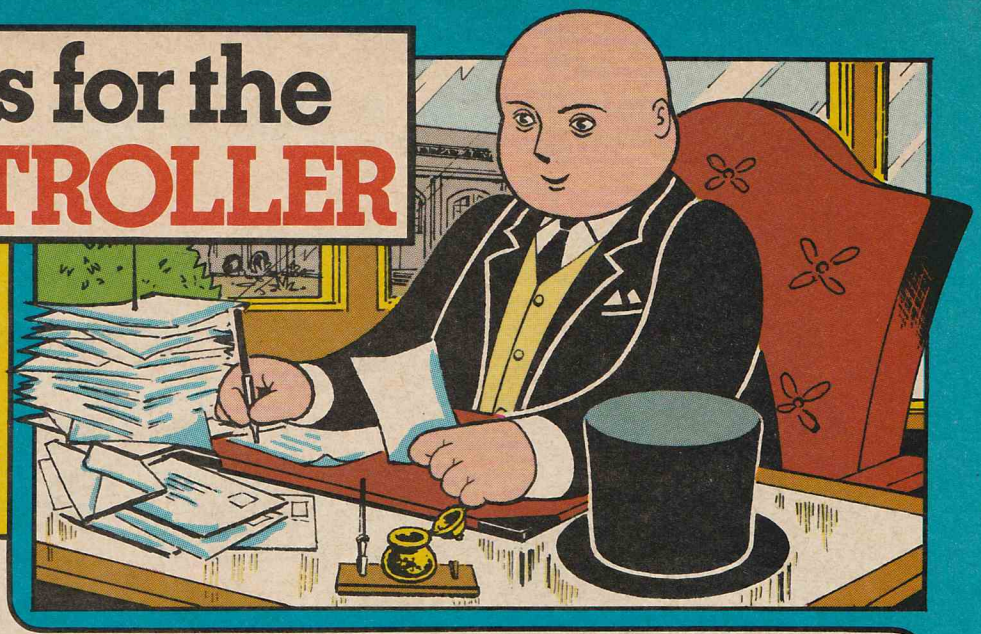


There is a fantastic competition for you to enter too! There are 72 splendid prizes of a set of die-cast models, consisting of Mavis, Daisy, Boco and the tar and milk wagons!

ON SALE NOW!

Your letters for the FAT CONTROLLER



Have you got an amusing story to tell? Do you have a question you would like to ask about Thomas or his friends? If so, then write to me at the address shown below! I would be so very pleased to hear from you!

STAR LETTER!

"Thomas's Friend!"

Dear Fat Controller,
My mummy and daddy took me to the Nene Valley Railway to see Thomas and his friends. At the time, Thomas was poorly and I helped the guard mend him!

Love from **Lewis Gamble**, aged 3.

Upon my soul! It was very caring and considerate of you to help Thomas's guard and I'm sure you made Thomas feel much better!

The sender of any letter that is printed as our **STAR LETTER** will win some splendid **Thomas Pre-school** toys courtesy of *ERTL (UK) Ltd.*

FAVOURITE STORIES!

Dear Fat Controller,
I love all your trains and my favourite story is about **"James and the Bees"**. My daddy laughs when James's eyes go round and round!

Love from **Ben**, aged 2.

I must say, I think James felt too important to be troubled by those bothersome bees! I also remember the time when Thomas's driver discovered a swarm of bees stuck to the side of Thomas's tank. Thankfully, the Beekeeper put them in a new hive!

HAPPY TWINS!

Dear Fat Controller,
We know all your engine's names and our favourite engines are Bill and Ben. We like them because we are twins too!

Love from **Anthony** and **Sam**, aged 2.

Well! Well! I know that Bill and Ben, the Saddletank twins enjoy working together. I do hope that you are very good friends and that you help each other at all times!

BIRTHDAYS!

Paul Andrew Feesey, Rachel Louise Child's (34835), Huw Costello, Karen Haines, Joshua Robertson, Joseph Lewis, Axel Elcome, Sam Cumbor, David Gray, Guy Ingram, Elliot Gurner, Stephan Larsson and Lee Roger Hayward.

If you would like a birthday mention printed in one of our future issues, please send details on a postcard at least **nine weeks** in advance!

Yours
Sir Topham Hatt

The Fat Controller!

Send your letters to:

The Fat Controller
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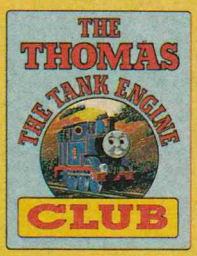

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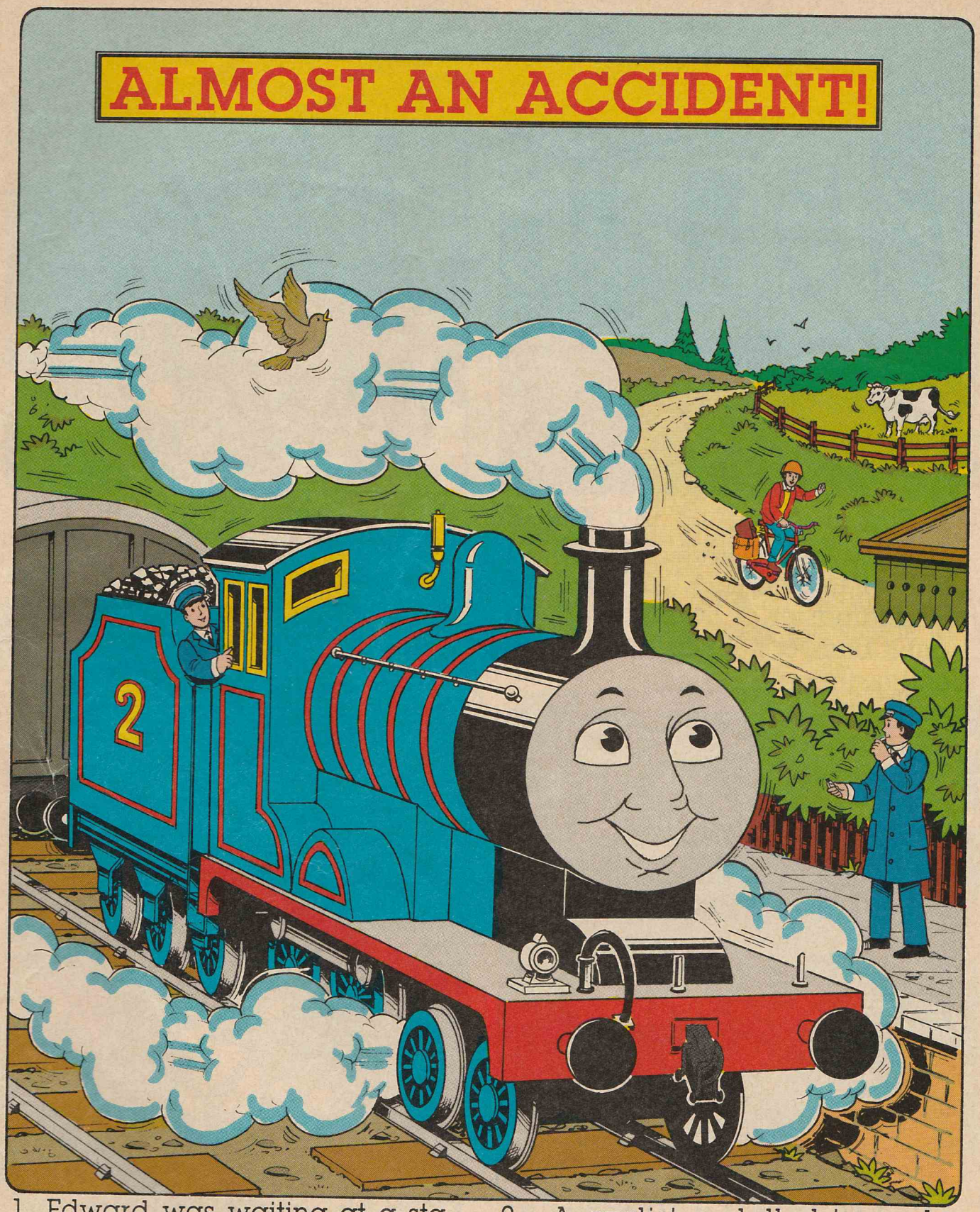
ALMOST AN ACCIDENT!

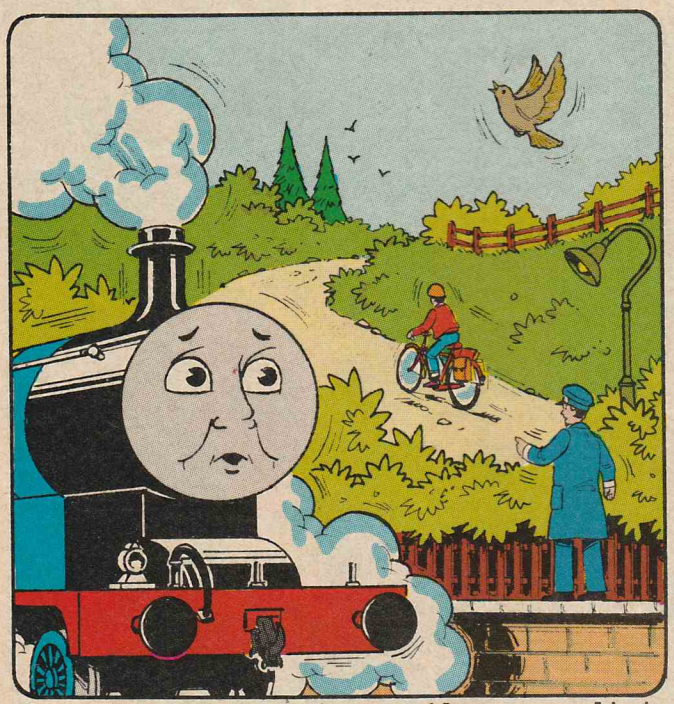


1. Edward was waiting at a station on his branch line to take the morning passenger train. The Stationmaster looked at his watch and was about to blow his whistle. "All aboard!" he cried.

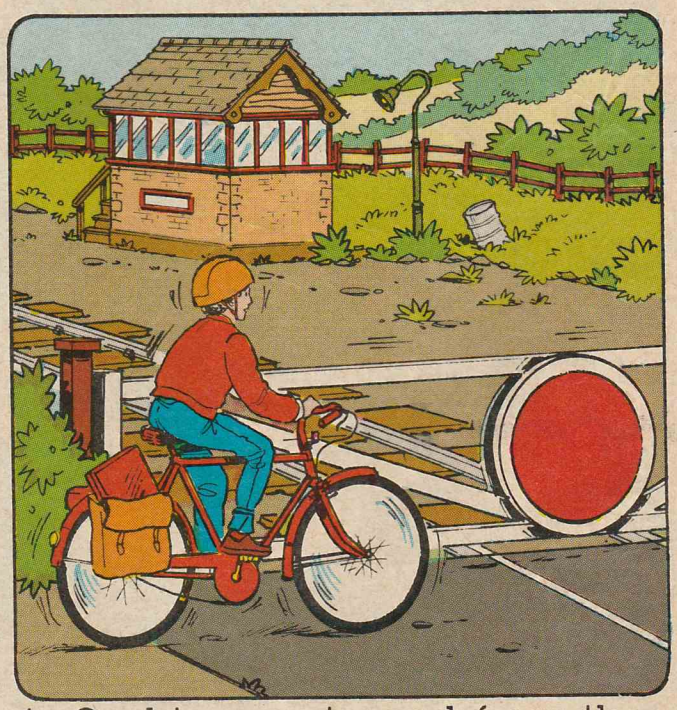
2. A cyclist pedalled towards the station, ringing his bell. "Wait for me!" he shouted. "We always do!" chuckled Edward. The man's bicycle was very old. He put it in the cycle rack.

3. The man hurried into one of Edward's carriages. "The chain fell off my bicycle," he told the Stationmaster. "I had to stop and put it back on!" Edward rolled out of the station.

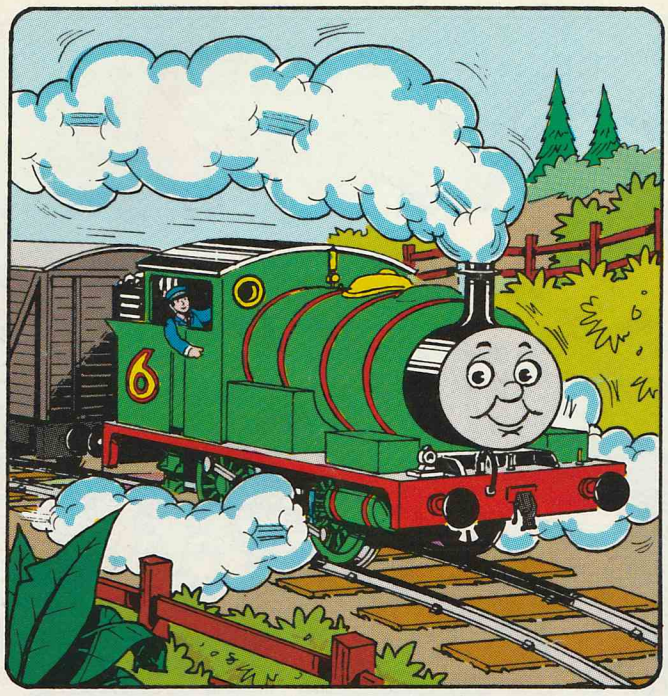
4. "The cyclist always gets here at the last moment," called the Stationmaster, "but Edward must run on time!" His driver agreed. "That cyclist needs a modern bicycle with gears!" he said.



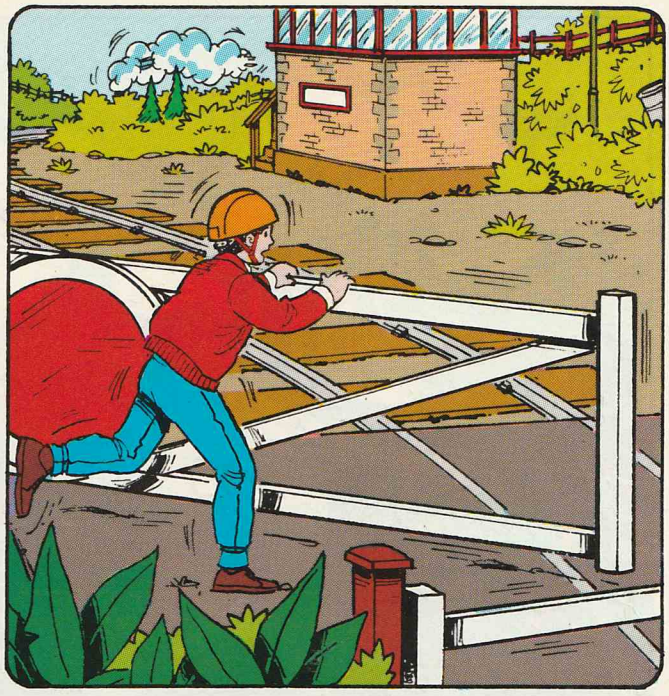
5. That evening, the cyclist caught Edward's train back to the station. He collected his bike and pedalled slowly uphill. "Gracious! he is puffing like an engine!" said Edward sadly.



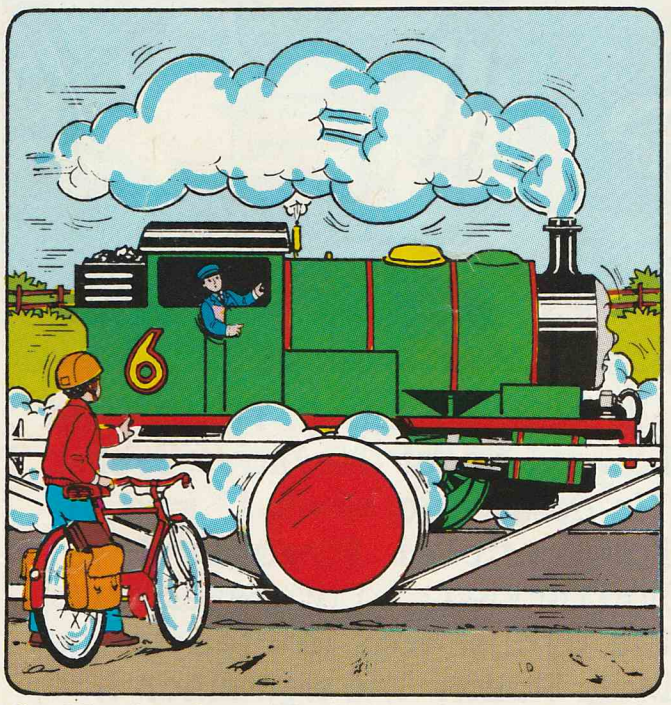
6. On his way to and from the station, the cyclist used a level-crossing. He always waved to the signalman, who was on duty in the signalbox beside the line to open and shut the gates.



7. Today the cyclist was puzzled. The gates were open, but he could not see the signalman. At that moment, Percy was racing along the track, pulling a goods train.

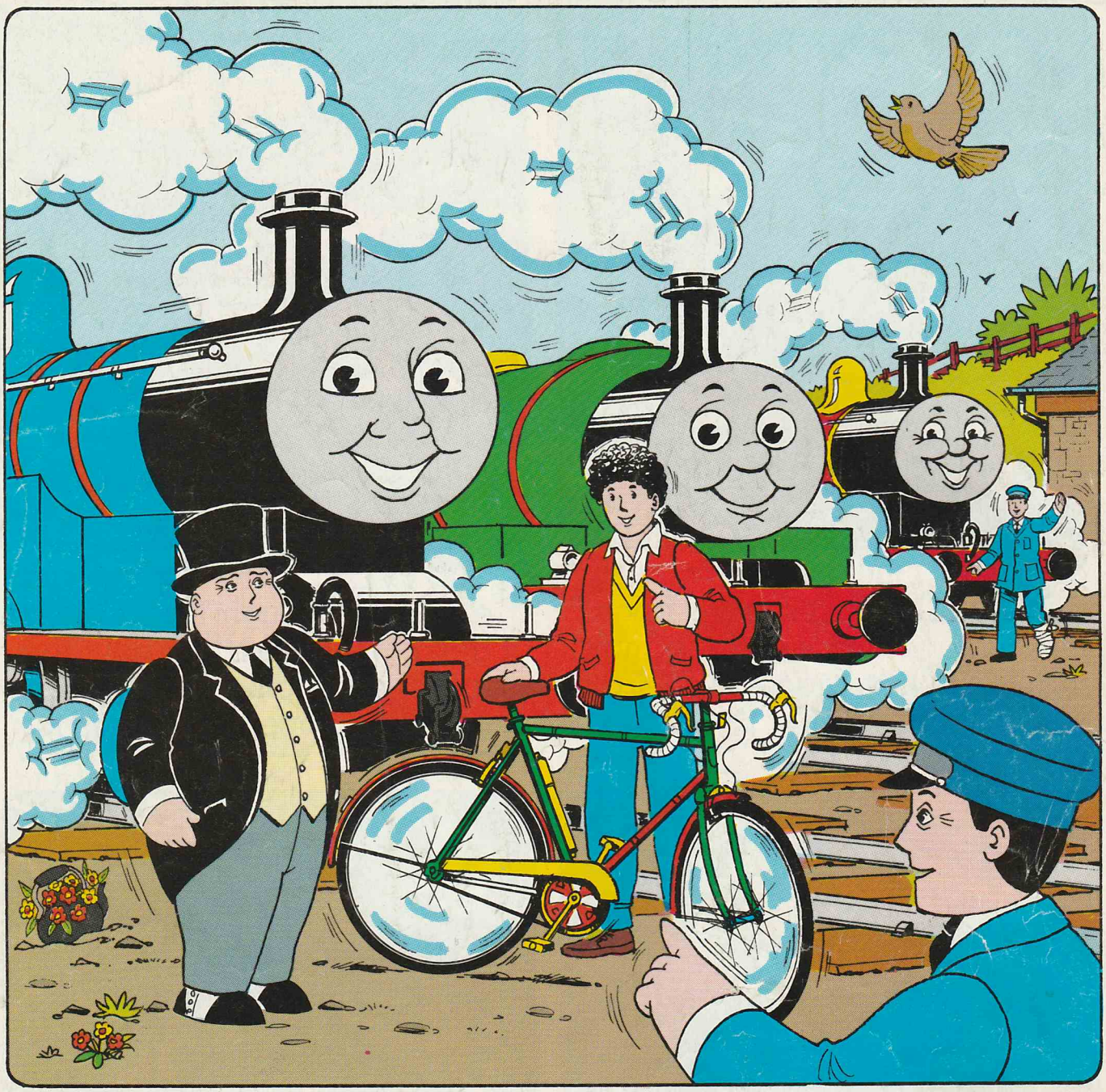


8. The cyclist knew Percy was due to pass through the crossing at any minute. He could hear the sound of an engine getting closer. He ran to open the gates for Percy.



9. He had pulled the big heavy gates away from the track just as Percy puffed into view. "Pip peep. Thank you," whistled Percy. His driver had seen the cyclist opening the gates for Percy.

10. Percy's driver realised something was wrong and when he had cleared the crossing, he shut off steam and applied the brake. The driver climbed down from the cab and went to speak to the cyclist.



11. "Thank goodness you were here to prevent an accident," said the driver. "But where is the signalman?" Percy's driver ran to see. He found him on the signalbox floor. "I fell over and hurt my ankle just as I was about to close the crossing gates," he said. Quickly the driver telephoned for a doctor to come as soon as possible.

12. That evening, Percy told Edward about the brave cyclist. "He deserves a reward," said the Fat Controller. Edward's driver had an idea and two weeks later the cyclist was invited to the Main Station. The signalman had recovered and was there too. They gave the cyclist a new bike. Now you can get to the station in good time!" said Edward.

THE END!

In our next issue: A new chance for Diesel!